



CAL FIRE State Fire Marshal Monthly Report to the California Fire Prevention Officers



**Kate Dargan
State Fire Marshal**

As we go to print, we are still tallying up the losses for the Southern California Fires. But we certainly know that October of 2007 will be remembered for one of the most destructive fire events in our state's history. The worst of it of course is the human toll – 10 people lost their lives and 4 firefighters were very seriously injured and are still being treated. Structure loss was staggering with more than 3,000 structures destroyed, most of them were homes, plus damage to businesses, schools, and public facilities. These fires caused the largest evacuation in the history of California with estimates hovering around 900,000 people displaced at the height of the incident.

State Fire Marshal staff was actively involved in many aspects of this incident as our experts were called on to assist with Information Officer, Damage

Assessment, and Tech Spec needs. ASFM Tonya Hoover served as a Liaison Officer to a new military Intel/SitStat Unit and had a chance to work with some of the Colorado Springs folks with whom we have partnered on WUI Risk Mapping. In fact, as we go to print this first week of November, we still have a large commitment of SFM employees working on the overview report of the fires which will become the permanent record of these 14 devastating wildfires.

Cal Fire/SFM will be heavily involved in the recovery and rebuilding efforts as well as promoting the critical need for planning and prevention to mitigate these disasters. Helping local officials rebuild in compliance with the new fire safety codes, developing planning guidelines, educating planners and firefighters about firesafe planning, and developing an ability to map our mitigation efforts so we know which communities are adequately prepared and which aren't – all are part of my next 5 years of goal setting. The next generation of homeowners in these areas will have a much better chance of surviving the inevitable wildfires that continue to plague Southern California if we incorporate all lessons learned into practice. We must build our homes with ignition-resistant materials, provide defensible space around them, and plan for the conflagration to occur.

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Fire Engineering

October Meetings and Presentations

- Chief Ben Ho gave a presentation regarding the new SFM listing process at NEMA (National Electrical Manufacturing Association) Fall Meeting in Dallas, Texas on October 3.
- Chief Tonya Hoover, Chief Ben Ho and Supervisor James Parsegian attended the CALSAFE Annual Conference in Monterey on October 6. Chief Hoover was a keynote speaker.
- Chief Ben Ho met with CAFAA (California Automatic Fire Alarm Association) Board of Directors on October 18, 2007 in San Diego.
- Supervisor James Parsegian conducted an NFPA 25 training at Woodland Fire Department on October 24, 2007. He also gave a UL 300 presentation to Monrovia Fire Department on October 25, 2007.

Faster Listing Process

The new SFM "Fast Track" listing process went into effect November 1, 2007. The new process will eliminate the delay for manufacturers to sell fire alarm equipment in California.

WUIBS Training

The Wildland Urban Interface Building Standards training is still going on. If you are interested sign up soon.

Class Topics:

- How buildings are exposed to wildfire
- Applicability and Implementation
- Roof Coverings and Assemblies
- Gutters
- Vents
- Related test procedures
- Eaves
- Exterior Walls
- Windows
- Decking
- Doors
- Projections
- Other buildings on the parcel

For more information, or to register,
please contact Steve Quarles
Email: stephen.quarles@fire.ca.gov
Telephone: (415) 233-1141

Fire and Life Safety

Photovoltaic Solar Task Force

The OSFM is continually working with the solar industry and the fire service to develop guidelines to allow solar energy systems on commercial and residential buildings and address safety and fire suppression concerns. If you have any local ordinances or department policies/procedures you would like to share with the task force group, please contact Vickie Sakamoto at (916) 445-8337 or email vickie.sakamoto@fire.ca.gov

CAL FIRE Office of the State Fire Marshal
<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov>
